Repair of NH-17

*313. SHRl-JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether NH-17 is an important inter-state port connectivity highway providing a major link of economic importance for movement of goods and passengers within coastal Karnataka and linking Kerala, Goa and Maharashtra;

(b) whether the bridges on this highway are in a damaged state and require major repair and re-strengthening;

(c) whether the State Government of Karnataka has requested for upgrading the entire length of NH-17 in Karnataka into four-lane highway; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and Governments response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) 11 bridges on this National Highways have been identified for their rehabilitation/ strengthening and out of these, rehabilitation/strengthening work for 8 bridges is in progress. Repair work for the balance bridges including those yet to be identified has been included in Anuual Plan 2008-09.

(c) and (d) Four laning of NH-17 from Mangalore to Suratakal is in progress under the Port connectivity Scheme. The remaining length between Kerala/Karnataka border to Kundapura is included for four laning under NHDP Phase-III, to be implemented by NHA1. For the portion between Kundapura to Katnataka/Goa border, award of consultancy services for preparation of feasibility study cum preparation of preliminary report for four laning is under way.

Institutions for Children of PIOs

*314. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of educational institutions and universities that are presently functioning or going to function for the children of People of Indian Origin (PIOs);

(b) the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is proposing any projects for establishing new technical education institutions for the children of PIOs; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (d) It is proposed to establish PIO/NRI University for the benefit of children of overseas Indians ad de-no*va* "Deemed University" under Section 3 of the UGC Act. The proposals received in this regard have been scrutinized by an inter-Ministerial Screening Committee and a decision would be taken by the Cabinet.